

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of the Claims will replace all prior listings and versions of the Claims in the application.

Listing of the Claims

Claims 1-13 (cancelled)

Claim 14 (cancelled)

Claims 15-18 (cancelled)

Claim 19 (currently amended): A tool suitable for use with split shot comprising ~~[[including]]~~:

- a) a thimble comprising an approximately circular open end and an approximately circular closed end and a body between the open end and the closed end defining a cavity adapted to receive a finger within the cavity, and wherein the thimble comprises ~~is of a type which includes~~ a first portion extending from the closed end which approximates a part of a right angle cone between two parallel planes each of which is normal to an axis of the cone, and a second portion extending from the first portion which approximates a cylinder; and
- b) a curved blade attached to the thimble at a position on the first portion which is near the second portion, the curved blade having a curvature matching a radius of curvature of the thimble at [[a]] the position on the first portion of the thimble which is near the second portion, the curved blade being attached to the thimble at the position and extending beyond the closed end, and
- c) a "U" shaped clip, the "U" shaped clip having an open end and a closed end, the "U" shaped clip being attached to the thimble roughly opposed from the curved blade such that the open end of the "U" shaped clip is near the closed end of the thimble.

Claim 20 (cancelled)

Claim 21 (original): The tool of Claim 19, wherein the thimble comprises ~~[[includes]]~~ a metal chosen from the group consisting of aluminum, steel, stainless steel, brass and copper.

Claim 22 (currently amended): A method of opening a split shot having a closed slot that is crimped around a fishing line ~~[[including]]~~ comprising the ~~aets~~ steps of:

- a) placing a tool onto a finger tip, the tool ~~[[including]]~~ comprising a thimble having an approximately circular open end and an approximately circular closed end and a body between the open end and closed end defining a cavity adapted to receive a finger within the cavity, and wherein the open end has a larger radius than the closed end, and a curved blade attached to the thimble at a position near the open end, the curved blade having a curvature matching a radius of curvature of the thimble at ~~[[a]]~~ the position near the open end, the curved blade being attached to the thimble at the position and extending beyond the closed end;
- b) placing the curved blade into the closed slot; and
- c) manipulating the curved blade to open the slot.

Claim 23 (currently amended): The method of Claim 22, wherein manipulating the curved blade ~~[[includes]]~~ comprises pushing on the curved blade.

Claim 24 (original): The method of Claim 22, wherein manipulating the curved blade includes twisting the curved blade.

Claim 25 (currently amended): The method of Claim 22, wherein manipulating the curved blade ~~[[includes]]~~ comprises dragging the curved blade through the slot.

Claim 26 (new): The tool of Claim 19, wherein said clip comprises spring metal.

Claim 27 (new): The method of Claim 22, wherein said thimble comprises a sewing thimble.

Claim 28 (new): The method of Claim 22, wherein said thimble comprises metal.

Claim 29 (new): The method of Claim 28, wherein said thimble and said curved blade each comprise a metal selected from the group consisting of aluminum, steel, stainless

steel, brass and copper.

Claim 30 (new): The method of Claim 22, said tool comprising a "U" shaped clip, the "U" shaped clip having an open end and a closed end, the "U" shaped clip being attached to the thimble roughly opposed from the curved blade such that the open end of the "U" shaped clip is near the closed end of the thimble.

Claim 31 (new): The method of Claim 30, wherein the "U" shaped clip comprises spring metal.

Claim 32 (new): The method of Claim 31, wherein the spring metal comprises spring steel.

Claim 33 (new): The method of Claim 22, wherein the blade surrounds about 60° of the circumference of the thimble.

Claim 34 (new): The method of Claim 22, said tool comprising means for crimping a split shot, the means attached to the thimble.

Claim 35 (new): The method of Claim 34, wherein said means comprises a "U" shaped clip, the "U" shaped clip having an open end and a closed end, the "U" shaped clip being attached to the thimble roughly opposed from the curved blade such that the open end of the "U" shaped clip is near the closed end of the thimble.

Claim 36 (new): A tool suitable for use with split shot comprising:

- a) a thimble comprising an approximately circular open end and an approximately circular closed end and a body between the open end and the closed end defining a cavity adapted to receive a finger within the cavity, and wherein the thimble comprises a first portion extending from the closed end which approximates a part of a right angle cone between two parallel planes each of which is normal to an axis of the cone, and a second portion extending from the first portion which approximates a cylinder;
- b) a curved blade attached to the thimble at a position on the first portion which is near the second portion, the curved blade having a curvature matching a radius of curvature of the thimble at the position, the curved blade extending beyond the closed

end, and

c) means for crimping a split shot, said means attached to the thimble.

Claim 37 (new): The tool of Claim 36, wherein said means comprises a "U" shaped clip, the "U" shaped clip having an open end and a closed end, the "U" shaped clip being attached to the thimble roughly opposed from the curved blade such that the open end of the "U" shaped clip is near the closed end of the thimble.